

Deadly Echos

by eliteElite

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Summary: With the splitting of the Covenant and humanities continuing plight, all 3 sides are in desperate situations. While their war rages on an echo cries through space bringing whispers promising of a new war unlike any they have seen before. Rated4later

1. Assessment

****A.N.:**** Wow, It's been a while since I wrote; maybe I'll finally get a sudden burst of initiative and finish some of my prior work, after I rewrite it all. 'Sigh'

The story has been edited again, more errors have been removed

****Disclaimer****: Screw the disclaimer, I'm making no money and only promoting there product. If anything Bungie should be thanking me and all of you as well. If they want to sue, go ahead and let them, it's a battle they can't win no matter who they have as a lawyer.

****Chapter 1:**** ****Assessment****

The room was dark, not pitch darkâ€¦ but dim. The lighting had been shut off by the rooms occupant, the only lighting illuminating the room was a single lance of light cast from the computer terminal built into his desk. His eyes burned from looking at the damned screen for hours, so he had hit the lights and leaned back in his black velvet chair and closed his eyes to sooth the painâ€¦ he needed rest, the rate at which he had been working was staggering for his age.

But he couldn't restâ€¦ not nowâ€¦

Humanity needed a guiding hand, humanity needed him. One of the few level headed personnel high up in the command chain of the UNSC. He knew his duty; he knew what he had to do.

Lord Terrance Hood had been reviewing battle reports from nearly all his command staff, he had started, but there was still much that needed to be looked at. Personnel losses, ship losses, enemy losses, equipment lossesâ€¦ so many losses.

Beep

He looked down at the keyboard, careful to avoid laying eyes on the screen and saw a little red light blinking. He had received a message of course, but the light was red, not green or orange or yellow; that meant this transmission was important, this was something he had to read. He sighed, disappointed at being disturbed in his momentary break.

"Lights. Full." He stated simply.

The sudden brightness was nothing Lord Hood wasn't used too, and returned his eyes to the computer monitor and clicked on the new message sign. After putting in a series of access keys and passwords, he finally opened the transmission.

**United Nations Space Command Priority Transmission **

**Flash 68487A-12 **

**Encryption code: Black **

**Public Key: File/Monthly/Oceania **

**From: Dr. Catherine Elizabeth Halsey M.D., Ph.D, special civilian consultant (Civilian Identification Number: 10141-026-SRB4695)
**

**To/ Admiral Terrance Hood, 2nd Fleet, Primary Navy Command, Office of Defense UNSCMID: 008378541 **

Subject: Spartan Support Units

**Classification: Restricted (XXVII-XX Directive) **

**/Start File/Decryption Key/ **

Due to recent events such as the attack on Earth, it is now clear the Covenant know the location of our primary military world. Even with the presence of 300 orbital MAC guns, Covenant forces still managed to penetrate the orbital defense grid and land ground forces on Earth, which resulted in the destruction of a major population center (light damage compared to nearly all previous engagements).

However, while property damage was great, life losses were low thanks to the quick and responsive deployment of Spartan 117. By punching a devastating hole into Covenant defensive line and grasping enemy attention, all civilian and non-combat personnel were evacuated, as well as putting a minimal loss on combat ground forces and equipment.

But the fact remains the same, the Covenant know we're here, and next time they'll come in force, maybe a force that was even bigger than the one that destroyed Reach. But due to the desperate attempt to

break through the orbital defense grid, rather than there usual suicidal method of trying to kill everything they can. Combined with Intel from few previous engagements, it has been reported that sometimes the Covenant did not immediately start orbital bombardment, or still yet when remaining UNSC forces jumped out of system, these planets are presumed to have been glassed, but no proved Intel has been returned to the status of these planets. The main point of this is that the Covenant wants something with Earth, something planet side.

Due to this new threat, I have seen it fit to send my newest Spartan Project, codenamed _Spartan Centurions_, to protect ground side MAC guns and generators.

This new Spartan units main purpose is to provide heavy support to the remaining Spartans of Alpha Company, ranging from intense covering fire to mobile cover. Sadly though, the genetic augmentation to the Spartan Centurions was far more risky to that of the Spartan IIs. Out of the 40 initial subjects, only 3 survived the augmentation. I have attached files concerning their performance, equipment, and skills.

Use these assets to your discretion Admiral, and apply them to their prime elements, I'm sure you'll be more then satisfied with the results. As for the Spartan IIs themselves, they will not be joining in on defending Earth; I have them in need of 'another' matter.

/End/

/Attached file 1 of 3/

**April 14th 2552 **

**Research Report A0712-UNSC WEACORP **

**Subject: Spartan Centurion Overview **

**Reporting Officer: CPO DuVal, UNSC WEACORP/ UNSCMID: 033278292
**

The Spartan Centurion augmentation procedure is rather different then Spartan II augmentation procedure. Though all the same altering chemicals are used, Spartan Centurions have different amounts of said chemicals.

The Carbide Ceramic Ossification material used to harden Spartan bones until they are like steel bands has been tripled, to the point where they can successfully absorb archer missile impacts directly without breaking. This allows them fall considerable distances without serious bodily damage.

The Catalytic thyroid implant has also been tripled, for this the Spartans are far larger then your average human, standing 9 feet tall at a minimum, this was required for the extra muscle mass that is needed for the main intent of Spartan Centurions.

The muscular enhancing protein complex injection however was the biggest difference, at a sturdy 10x the amount of regular Spartan IIs, it was required for the field of work that would be required of

them and is the main reason so few survived the augmentation. Needed to operate the equipment they would need. This intense strength allows them demolish buildings with their bare hands, throw large objects such as civilian cars or chunks of debris to disorient enemies, overturn anything as heavy as a Scorpion MBT too perhaps use as cover, and gives them the ability to make heavy defensive positions in minutes.

However, the superconducting fibrification of neural dendrites and the Occipital Capillary Reversal procedures have been considerably lessened. They are not as fast or versatile as the Spartan IIs, their reflexes, though still considerably well, are not as good as Spartan IIs, and their eye site isn't up to par with Spartan II standards, just enough to not trouble them in night conditions and see an acceptable extra distance. Equipment has been built to counteract the deficiencies in armor systems; however, these particular skills will not measure up to Spartan IIs under any circumstance, even with the presence of armor systems.

/End/

/Attached File 2 of 3/

**April 16th 2552 **

**Technology Report A1012-UNSC WEACORP **

**Subject: Spartan Centurion Equipment **

**Reporting Officer: CPO Beckett, UNSC WEACORP, UNSCMID: 022371238
**

The Spartan Centurions armor systems are suited just for their needs and are equipped with the best technology to date using human, Covenant, and in far fetch way, Forerunner technology.

There armor systems include a heavy duty rechargeable shield battery, meant to withstand waves of either bullet or plasma fire. Fiber optic wiring, two layers of ballistic cooling gel, Internal cooling systems, built in melee weapons in each forearm, motion sensor, a miniature built in 'dumb' AI to organize and provide tactical intelligence and combat conditions. A flexible, durable, and airtight advanced Kevlar jumpsuit underneath armor plating that contains 6 hours of extra air (Compressed into air tanks that are fed from inside the armor) in space conditions. Many overlapping armor plates made from a super dense heat absorbing metal short named Tri-titanium S that is created by melting titanium in a superheated melting chamber to form a Titanium gas, is then introduced and dissolved into a liquidized Carbon mixture with trace amounts of other required elements and exposed to extreme pressure. The resulting product is a very physical and heat resistant diamond like Titanium compound. All together there heavy defensive armor systems come in at total weight of 7.02tonnes

The Most fetching feature of the Spartan Centurions armor systems though is the ammunition supply system. Using data recovered from 'smart' AI Cortana during her stay with Spartan 117 on Halo, we were able to organize the complex calculations, physics, and technological requirements in order to transport objects like the so called '343 Guilty Spark'. However, our developed technology isn't nearly as good

that on the Halo construct, we can still transport small objects within 3 x 3 foot radius a good distance with perfect precision, these objects include ammunition.

The Centurions can manipulate what type ammunition they wish to be transported by tapping there fingers against their palms, each finger opening a direct category, and then pick what kind of ammo they need from a subcategory from there. This system allows the Spartan Centurions to lay massive amounts of fire power down without much consequence. However, this feature requires a specialized ship or facility to constantly provide them with ammunition. Should said method become compromised, it puts the Centurions at a considerable disadvantage and they may have to resort to hand-to-hand combat for an extended period of time. In missions where the ship may not be able to say for a prolonged period of time, the Spartan Centurions carry large backpacks for there munitions.

The Spartan Centurions use specialized firearms due to there size, and there are not many in number, here is a list along with a basic description.

The ML18 Gatling Gun " Meant to be one of the standard weapons for all Centurion Spartans. A .30 Caliber 5 barreled rapid fire chain gun capable of firing approximately 83 of rounds per second and totaling at 5000 rounds per minute, clip size contains exactly 5000 rounds. After tweaking with Covenant weaponry, we have found a way for all rounds to be flash charged with plasma, giving them even more lethal power, this feature can be shut off for it can leave a slight blue trail from the glowing blue bullet. Their size, armor, and augmentation allows them to deal with the intense recoil of the gun.

The AR_-87A Carbine " The equivalent of a marine assault rifle, this gun is good for prolonged enemy exposure at medium range, carrying 300 rounds of 0.75 Caliber rounds that can also be flash charged with plasma, this gun allows the Spartans too outlast any enemy in a prolonged medium range engagement. This weapon has a good deal of accuracy and comes with a medium range scope and has the 3 standard modes of fire. Comes with 1 slot for a shot gun, grenade launcher, or bayonet attachment.

The VS2 Anti-Tank Rifle (ATR) " An Anti-Tank Rifle that works in close, medium, and far ranges, this shocking 1.20 Caliber rifle can put a hole end through end in just about any vehicle short of a slip space capable starship. Using a miniature version of MAC technology, it launches the bullets using combustion and massive magnetic forces at velocities over 2.5km a second in atmosphere and faster yet in space. This gun can also be used as a sniper rifle, though the use for sniping individual targets is rare, the bullets fired are usually explosive rounds with the power of one standard fragmentation grenade, used for taking out clusters of enemies at a large distance. It has a 5 round clip, can be flash charged with plasma, grenade rounds cannot be flash charged, or else they'll explode.

The IR_-1 Flame Thrower " This Flame thrower uses a special butane mix or plasma cells, and supplies any flame with plenty of extra oxygen to ensure complete combustion. The blue flames can lower standard grade Covenant shields and eliminate standard infantry quickly and effectively. The flames have a maximum range of 50 yards. Can spray hotter plasma flames, but at a radius of only 20

yards.

The KK-_A2 Magnum â€" _The standard sidearm of a Spartan Centurion. An .80 Caliber magnum pistol powerful enough to destroy light vehicles. It is used very rarely, but it is proven to be very reliable and accurate. Comes with a 2x scope, and is the only Spartan Centurion weapon to come with a silencer (the silencer is one foot long, its length is to ensure complete silence when fired). 8 bullet capacity. Can be flash charged with plasma.

_The AS-SC12 Auto Shotgun â€" _A large automatic shotgun that contains standard 8 gauge slugs, anything higher and the recoil from the constant firing will best even the Centurions. One wheel shaped clip contains 36 slugs of various ammunition types. Devastatingly effective in enclosed spaces.

_The SSRM-SC1 Rocket Launcher â€" _This rocket launcher is capable of firing both rockets and RPGs, it has 3 missile tubes, 2 for the heavy duty Spartan munitions, and 1 tube that fires 1 standard sized rocket for immediate emergency use. Can fire plasma explosives and can track moving targets at a considerable distance. The heavy duty munitions have enough power to lower seraph shields with one rocket, and finish it with the next.

/End/

/Attached file 3 of 3/

**April 17th 2552 **

**Naval Technology Report A1418-UNSC WEACORP **

**Subject: Spartan Centurion Supply and Support Ship **

**Reporting Officer: CPO Clyde, UNSC WEACORP, UNSCMID: 037478738
**

The Spartan Centurions are basically in need of a mobile munitions plant, otherwise their uses diminish, that is why we have taken the liberty into turning an out-of-date _Phoenix_-class light frigate into a specialized mobile armory for the Spartan Centurions; this ship has been dubbed _Dark Whisper_ by Dr. Halsey. Its planned construction began as soon as the Spartan Centurion project was about halfway done, so the ship would be able to fit with the best gear available. It has taken approximately 4 and half years to complete retrofitting and still gets updated technology installed on a regular basis.

First of all, the teleporting technology took a massive amount of space, so we had to take out nearly 3 quarters of the crew bunks on the ship as well as three of the five cafeterias and an equipment repair shop to maximize on cargo space. With the more then tripled space, we were able to install the teleporting technology and have plenty of space for the Centurion's ammunition.

The 3 Hangers each contain 2 modified pelicans each, while the 1 remaining vehicle bay contains 12 warthogs designed from the ground up to support the Spartan Centurion's combined weight. The car in itself is over 6 times heavier then the standard warthog due to all the metal need to make a sturdy chassis and frame, and an engine

powerful enough to transport the Spartan Centurions in a manner that was faster then they could run if air support was not available. The warthogs still have the 3 standard positions of a gunner, driver, and passenger.

The remaining space is for the crew of the ship, which used to be a compliment of 450, has now been reduced to 120 personnel, consisting of 16 command staff, 67 standard crewmen such engineers, technicians, and repairmen, 7 medical crew, and 1 small platoon of 30 military personnel in case if the ship ever gets boarded, plus the 3 Spartan Centurions. The rest of the space is crew quarters, a machine shop, 2 cafeterias, a standard marine armory, a briefing room, wash facilities, advanced medical facility, bridge, engine room, recreational area, and other ship required facilities.

Extra space in the MAC cannon area was used to make a giant version of an elite stealth generator. Though the first many versions failed, a working version was finally achieved and installed upon the ship. It isn't perfect due to our limited understanding on how it exactly works. The hull armor plating has also been expanded to two meters in thickness instead of one and has been honeycombed on the inside like it was on the Pillar of Autumn, to allow it to take a good beating. However, due to the size of the ship, a volley of plasma torpedoes from a Covenant heavy cruiser will be more then sufficient in destroying it, depending if all shots hit, which is extremely unlikely due to the advanced engines of the Dark Whisper. The hull is also coated in the same radar bouncing material on ONI prowler ships, making the cloaked ship just seem like a subspace echo. All this allows the ship to be extremely well hidden and stealthy, allowing for more continued support of the Spartan Centurions under dangerous conditions. All hallways and access hatches have been enlarged to allow the Spartan Centurions easy access to all areas of the ship.

All primary defenses on the ship were removed to allow for more space in the ship for the cloaking generator. All that remains for ship defenses are 25 light craft defenses, however the standard 50mm cannons have been modified to be like most Spartan Centurion weapons. All 25 50mm rotary cannons can now fire rounds that are flash charged with plasma

/End/

Lord Hood looked at the monitor with a blank expression on his face, not surprised that something of this nature happened, for he had been expecting it for a while. However, being human, he was still curious.

"_What are you planning Halseyâ€¦|_" He thought, "_What are you trying to doâ€¦|_"

A.N.: I hope it wasn't too long and boring, but I think it was necessary. Now try and remember these new Spartans are not supposed to better then the Spartan IIs in every way and I try to make it so for every powerful advantage they have, it can also have severe drawbacks. So for every strength, they have a weakness as well.

A.N.: Be sure to point out any mistakes, as I want this to be perfect.

2. Quarantine

****A.N.:** ****Well,** here's the second chapter, I hope it isn't so bad. My writing tends to get little reviews, but the ones I get are highly appreciated!

****Note:**** Story has now been edited and Karen's name has been changed to Winter.

Review Responses

****Torn Fragments AKA Heatwave222**** " Thanks for the encouragement, as for the VS2 ATR (if that's what you're talking about), I believe that the weapons humanity wields in Halo are far under par of what they should be 500 years in the future, even as cool as they are (assault rifle! Woo!). The weapons the Centurions use are kind of like my own depiction of what they should/could be like. And thanks again for the encouragement!

****Tsukia-Kun ****" This doesn't even really count, I was there when you wrote this review, much to my dismay.

****FAT DUDE**** " I'm glad you like it!

****The One Called Sugar**-** Thanks for saying you liked it, as for my other story, it will be a while till I can get to posting that, but at least I already have half of that chapter typed before I never finished writing it!

On another note, if you have trouble picturing a Spartan Centurion in your head, they kind of look like a cross between a Fire Emblem General, and Spartan II.

****Chapter 2: ****Quarantine****

Boring"

Yup, boring; that was the only way Jee-ki could surmise his current situation.

Jee-ki was but a lowly Unggoy, and as such he was forced to do jobs that were less than enjoyable. He and his companion, Yalar, were on patrol around the small Covenant encampment, erected at the edge of the crater which used to be a large human settlement. And unhappy as he was, he was less than impressed with the current situation.

He thought this was just going to be another simple relic hunt, where he would be sent to the planet, uncover some Forerunner relics, let the Elites take all the credit, and move on like he had been doing for the last 2 whole cycles. But not this time, this time they stumbled on probably the biggest human world ever discovered. They should have just turned tail and fled, but no, Regret had other things in mind. Sacrificing hundreds of lives to destroy two of who knows how many orbital guns, he managed to create a small entrance to the planets surface. He then ordered the other 14 ships of the fleet to surround his flagship, which he thankfully had been on, to form a sacrificial shield. The other human gun platforms destroyed every single ship in the first volley of fire, while Regrets ship, and him

along with it, made it to the surface. Now that ship was gone too, leaving in a dramatic way that rendered the city they were trying to capture nothing but a giant hole in the ground, curtesy of a slip space explosion or something like that.

The city center and most of the outlying area had been destroyed, but some of the outskirts had survived the blast that resulted from their ship going into slip space within the planets atmosphere. This is where the surviving Covenant forces on this planet, or at least the ones they knew about, had converged. They had used these few buildings as a base, not one of the camps occupants enjoyed the fact, but it was either that or travel into the flat, windy, dust filled savannah into unknown and unfriendly territory. Personally, Jee-ki liked the former, unlike some of those Elite blues, wanting to go gallivanting for glory, but the higher ranked Elite majors decided to camp here for the moment, knowing that trying to locate more survivors was a priority at the time.

His thoughts then turned to when the ship went into slip space; he had never seen such a large explosion! And the shockwave! He never felt such a force in his life! He was standing on a street corner with Yalar and Hern, staring at the explosion when it hit them. He and Yalar were pinned against the wall of a building, but Hern however wasn't backed to the structure and was sent hurtling down the street. They hadn't seen him since.

He and Yalar quietly trekked on their patrol route around the encampment and soon came upon what they would call, the 'main entrance' as it was the widest entrance being a road. There were 3 Elites on guard, and about another eight Elites digging a hole a little farther down the road, behind them a human trailer filled with jackal corpses and dead eels that used to be hunters.

That was another thing about the explosion, it created a radiation or poisonous gas of some sort in the area, because any species who did not have any kind environmental suit or energy shielding died soon after the explosion. All that was left were the Unggoy and Sangheili.

Jee-ki guessed that they were burying the dead just so they wouldn't have rotting corpses all over the base, because that would just be unpleasant. Perfectly content with that, he slowly trotted along his designated route, not really paying attention at all, and thinking what he'd rather be doing right now. He knew that he still had 300 units of patrol time till he switched shifts with someone else, till then, he'd though he'd try to have a conversation with Yalar.

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

"We have sighted Covenant contacts," A cool feminine voice said, "Advise"

"_Roger Red-one,_" another female voice replied.

Silence or

"_Green light to engage hostiles_"

"Any specific orders regarding the situation?" said the first

voice.

This time a male voice spoke on the channel, a slight chuckle could be heard.

"_It's your party"_

"Understood. Out." She cut the channel.

She smirked from underneath her helmet and looked at the Covenant base.

The wind was picking up.

"â€|_Perfectâ€|_"

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

It was nightfall at this planet now, Jee-ki surmised this is as it got darker and darker, he would have looked at the sun to verify that, however, the massive dust clouds the wind was stirring up were starting to blot out everything. He had to squint to keep the sand from his eyes, plus he was tired, hungry, and his legs ached from walking for so long.

But finally his patrol shift was over, and he saw the replacement Unggoy at the main entrance, waiting for him and Yalar to show up. He sighed, looking forward to sleeping in the one small methane chamber they had, eager to rid himself of his armor.

He heard a loud humming in the distance, and looked over to see the last Elite scout team for the day coming over a hill behind him, coming in on the camps right flank. The two ghosts came first then followed by the spectre minus one occupant, he briefly wondered why, then saw the looming form a wraith hover over the hill. They didn't have that before, maybe they recovered it? Maybe; he particularly didn't care; he just wanted to sleep, so he continued to the other two Unggoy.

"You patrol Unggoy?" asked one of the two.

"Yep," said Jee-ki and gestured to himself and Yalar, "that us"

"You lucky" The other unknown Unggoy said, "No have to watch in dust you do"

"Hope not last long for you's sake" Yalar said, trying to be friendly.

There was a moment of silence, but none of them could really think of anything to say and they all silently shuffled their feet as they watched the convoy hover by, and then a red Elite in a ghost started talking to one of the blue Elite guards.

"Better get going," The first Unggoy suddenly spoke, "Or else Elite beat us up"

Jee-ki let out a dry chuckle and waved as the Unggoy pair started down the patrol route, "Be safe"

Jee-ki and Yalar started walking inside the base, and a moment later when the guard finished talking with the lead Elite of the scout group they began to move inside of the base behind them.

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

"Status" said that icy feminine voice again.

Two green lights winked on the corner of her helmet. She then switched radio channels.

"Major, please make a flyby"

"_Copy that_" Said a deep male voice, "_Doing a low altitude overhead run now_"

She looked down the scope of the large rifle in her hands, its long barrel pointed towards the Covenant camp. She spied a member of the convoy talking to one of the guards and then resumed aim at her target.

A hum was heard in the distance.

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

Everyone ducked down and went prone when they heard the human fighter incoming, and the vehicles thumped to the ground as they seem to be powered down in unison. Fear gripped Jee-ki as the sound grew quickly louder, and finally he put his hands over his ears when the fighter screamed overhead. It lasted for not even a whole second, then the roar quickly started to die away.

"_Did humans find us?_" he thought.

The human fighter that flew over them had not dropped bombs or any other kind of weapon. But then again, maybe the fighter spotted them and would return? Maybe the pilot didn't even see them at all and they were still safe? He couldn't be sure, and started to return to his feet and look around, looking around he saw others were slowly doing the same. The Elites started powering up their vehicles again, save one. The wraith.

Suddenly Jee-ki had a deep feeling of dread as he stared at the tank.

The Elite sitting on the side of a spectre hopped off and banged on the side of the tank, asking what was taking him so long.

Nothing happenedâ€¦

The Elite banged on the side of the tank again, asking the Elite inside what was wrong. Jee-ki found himself coming towards the opposite side of the tank for some reason unknown to him, and he observed it, tracing his small rough hands over the smooth black metal. He found something quite quickly.

A hole. That can't be good.

He looked at it for a second, wondering how it even got there, and

then called an Elite over in a muted squeak.

"Excellency! Excellency!" he choked out.

The armored red of the caravan came to him, somewhat annoyed, "What is it grunt?"

"Lookâ€|" Jee-ki pointed towards the hole on the wraith.

The Elite made a humming sound, and then looked at the hole, briefly pondering for a second. Then to Jee-ki's and the Sangheili's horror, purple blood started to drip out of the hole, splattering on the ground sandy ground in thick droplets. The Elites face hardened considerably, and he looked up at the Elite who had been banging on the other side of the hatch, who was staring at him curiously.

"Boro'mee!" he barked, "Check the side of the wraith for a hole!"

The Elite did as he was asked, and searched the side of the tank.

"There is leader" he said then and gestured to the side of the wraith, "Right here"

The Elite major's face hardened even more at that, he then grabbed Jee-ki by the methane tank on his back and threw him in the general direction of the base, surprising everyone, especially Jee-ki.

"Everyone, find cover!" he screamed.

The Elites all ran for the buildings for their cover, and once Jee-ki got to his feet he did too, only the buildings were mostly full, so ran down the street a little more and hid behind a pile of flat melted cars that had been put earlier that day to get them out of the way.

Then he waited for a few seconds, and listened to the whipping of the wind, looking at the sand it was swirling around outside the base.

Thumpâ€| Thumpâ€| Thumpâ€|

Everyone tensed when they heard the foreboding rhythm of heavy footfalls of some unseen person or object. All drew their weapons and pointed them into the swirling sandstorm.

At first Jee-ki thought it was a hunter pair, and he eased a bit, but then released if a hunter pair were here, in this general area, it would be dead.

Thumpâ€| Thumpâ€| Thumpâ€|

The heavy metallic clanking footfalls were getting louder and louder, and Jee-ki guessed there was at least two of them, he checked his plasma pistol to make sure it was fully charged, it wasn't, but he dared not move.

"Open fire! Open fire!" the Elite major screamed suddenly.

A wave of blue and green plasma was sent out into the sand, hoping to hit whatever was approaching them. They fired and fired, Jee-ki with them, until all their weapons over-heated.

THUMPâ€| THUMPâ€| THUMPâ€|

Whatever it was, it survived a volley of super heated plasma, and not a lot of things could do that.

Jee-ki mind was gripped with an unknown terror, telling him to flee, runaway before it was too late. He wanted to, but his legs wouldn't moved, they were frozen in place, and he couldn't tear his eyes away from the dust storm.

Faint shadowed forms began to emerge from the unforgiving sands; they were big, that was for certain. The figures kept coming forward; and they looked on from their positions in the buildings.

Then the figures seemed to heft something large in their arms, and pointed them at the base. Jee-ki heard a low whirring noise, and in fear, he immediately ducked down.

"FIRE!" screamed the major.

They never had the chance.

Hundreds of thin blue objects suddenly tore through the air and started ripping everything and everyone apart. Many who were in the buildings soon found that their cover was useless, as the blue rounds pierced the simple buildings with ease, as well as anyone inside. Jee-ki watched in fascinated horror as his comrades were being slaughtered, a large stream of fire converged on the house where he knew Yalar had taken cover. Glowing bullets continued to stream through the house, running it through and ramming into the next house and knocking off huge chunks of debris from both buildings as it did so. Finally the house couldn't take anymore torment; it buckled, and then it collapsed into a pile of rubble.

Even then the fire continued on, never ending, the twin streams switched to the house at the other side of the street. Jee-ki yelped when the fire momentarily swept past his position, and dozens of rounds impacted the melted cars he has hiding behind; they had stopped most of the deadly bullets but a few punched through the metal and rose up large plumes of dirt causing Jee-ki to let out yet another yelp.

The bullets streamed on and on, and the second house received that same fate as the first, Jee-ki heard the dying screams of those who survived the bullets in the building as its ruins crushed them.

Jee-ki then heard the loud roar of several Sangheili, and looked down the street to see a group of around six charging out from a building down the street. Half of them wielded the ever powerful plasma blade, while the other three ran down the street each with twin plasma rifles a-blazing. Jee-ki cringed when the fire was swiftly directed down the street to face the new threat, and several rounds panged against his cover.

Jee-ki watched the Elites get cut down without mercy. Their shields overloaded quicker than Jee-ki had ever seen before and he watched in muted horror as he finally witnessed what the bullets could do first hand.

They seemed to simply chew the Elites apart, the leading Elite roared in pain when the bullets punched right through his abdomen, and his blood spilled on the ground.

But that wasn't all, whoever was shooting seemed content to kill the Elites behind him by shooting through the first until nothing was left. After his abdomen was punctured, his right leg seemed to just explode into blood and flesh, then his right arm was severed at the elbow, another bullet took half the poor Elites face off, and then his left arm was dismembered taking a good deal of his torso with it. At that time what was left of the body hit the ground with what Jee-ki would've thought been a sickly splatter, but at the moment he could only hear the menacing cough of an unknown weapon.

The Elites behind the first suffered similar fates; in a matter of seconds gaping holes were punched through their bodies, and a few limbs were sent astray. The high velocities of the gun shots were sending blood and gore flying behind them in long slick splatters.

Still the fire did not stop! If just kept coming and coming and coming! Cutting down whoever got in its way, when would it ever end!?

Jee-ki noticed that whatever was shooting did not seem to see him, or care about him, either way. Jee-ki shakily forced himself to his knees, and looked out through a hole that one of the bullets had caused.

Through the small tunnel his vision could discern the shadowed forms, blue death raining from their position on onto the encampment, then to make things worse, a small thinner form, though still very large, showed up between the initial two. They stood there for a second, and then the two larger forms began moving forward, and the thinner one was right behind them.

What emerged from the sands however, Jee-ki had no words he could use to describe such a sight.

Deep grooves covered every part of them, twisting and turning all over their armored bodies that almost formed some kind of hell creature. Thick armor plates seemed to cover every part of their giant forms, and the tremors that ran through the ground with every step they took made the metal plates seem all the more thicker. The dull gray and blue colors of the armor almost made the titans seem like an ethereal ghosts with the way the light just seemed to bend around them, creating an almost angelic form.

An angelic form, maybe, but with a less than angelic purpose.

The giant weapon in their hands was probably bigger than he was, and sputtered deadly projectiles non-stop, pelting the entire area with destruction. The long and multiple barrels were spinning faster than he could track, and they hefted the large weapons with about as much

trouble he had with his pistol. Jee-ki didn't need to think to know the bullets were infused with plasma somehow judging by the blue glow they emitted; Jee-ki couldn't imagine having the round ram through you, leaving behind plasma in its wake to burn the internals of your body, causing a pain that the victim would forever remember, if he or she survived at all.

The metal giants continued their endless shooting, walking down the street as they did so, directly toward the middle of the camp, and directly toward where Jee-ki was hiding.

Upon this realization Jee-ki discontinued his stunned staring, and immediately fear gripped his mind. He knew he had no chance, he couldn't fight them and win, not alone, not like this; he had but one real option for survival, and that was play dead.

He crawled to the corner in a hurry, and threw as much debris as he could over himself; he promptly loosed all feeling in his body and went limp, creating the convincing sight of a dead Unggoy.

He heard them walk closer and closer, soon pebbles began to shake around him, and he could feel the ground vibrate more and more with every step the titans took closer to his position. It took everything Jee-ki had to not get up and bolt, the mere sight of them made him want to run, just run and hide somewhere he'd know he'd be safe, somewhere he'd know he could take refuge and not cower in fear. He had no such place.

"_Am I going to live?_" He thought, eyes screwed tight; they were not far now.

"_Shall I die like all the others? In a sea of nameless people, fighting for a reason we do not know?_" He heard another Unggoy squeal in pain, but it quickly ended.

"_Is this where I'm going to die?_" He heard the sound of screeching metal, followed by the crumble of another building falling to ruin.

"_I don't want to dieâ€¦_" They were very near now, probably just a stone throw away.

"_Not like thisâ€¦_"

At that moment, Jee-ki couldn't stop himself from blacking out.

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"New enemy targets, bearing from the northern warehouses" A male western accent said.

"Confirmed, Red-two", a male voice of German accent replied, "Redirecting fire to engage"

A massive armored form trampled forward pass some melted cars, the Gatling gun in its hands spewing deadly uranium depleted rounds at his targets without mercy, without remorse. They fell quickly.

"Red-three" he heard his leader talking suddenly, "A group of Elites have fled down the street to your left, you already know they keep their vehicles behind the buildings there. Eliminate them, and secure the vehicles if possible"

"Roger that Red-one" Red-three promptly replied, and thundered off to execute his order.

Another armored soldier watched as he stomped away, and quickly looked to reassess the battle ground. The encampments center was almost destroyed, all that was left to do was swing around the edges of the camp, secure any spoils, and then hunt down the runaways.

Red-one looked to other larger behemoth in front, spraying all the buildings in the circular area as evenly as he could.

But then the .30cal rounds stopped, the barrel spun, a rapid clicking noise could be heard, and steam streamed out of the barrel in wavy puffs. The armored figure made a quick motion with his hand, and a large black box jettisoned out the gun and landed on the ground with a metallic clank. The figure lowered the weapon and clicked his fingers against his palm; there were a few rings of yellow light, and a black box identical to the one that had been ejected appeared. The figure quickly grasped it, slid it in where the old box had been, and the gun did the rest. But before he started firing, the shorter armored figure stopped him.

"Red-two!" Red-one said in a quick snap.

"Ma'am?" The larger armored form grunted back, not glancing back but looked all over the area in front of him for any sign of movement.

He was right when he said ma'am, Red-one was a female, easily identified by her much more defined and slimmer armor. But just because she was a woman did not mean she needed to be protected, she was just as fierce as them, if not more, justified by the fact she was in command of them, and as such he would give her his utmost respect.

"Do a perimeter check of the whole area" she said, motioning a circular motion around the camp, "eliminate any enemy contacts you see. I'll hang back and finish up here"

"Right away!" he stomped off straight ahead, and ran between two buildings and down another street.

That left her alone in the circular area, to clean up the mess, of course, even though she was capable of assaulting with them. But they had chosen chain guns, she had chosen an assault rifle; they were better equipped for the task.

She leveled the assault rifle with the terrain and stalked up to the nearest building, a single floor convenience store, rows of shelves inside, several had numerous gaping holes in them.

"_Nothing on motion trackerâ€¦_" she thought.

Poking the assault rifle through the window, she swept it around

inside looking for anything out of place; nothing.

Just to be sure however, she slid around the corner of the building and without looking clicked her pinky against her palm twice, and then her ring finger. She opened her armored hand, and blue sphere showed up on Red-ones palm after a brief flash of yellow light. She quickly pulled the pin and chucked it into the convenience store.

There was a low volume bang accompanied by a very bright flashâ€¦ not a thing stirred inside. And only the steady roar of chain guns in the distance could be heard.

She continued to do this along all the houses: check motion tracker, visual verification, flash bang, and then another visual verification.

On the second last building, which was a small 2 floor apartment building, a flurry of activity exploded on motion tracker when the flash bang detonated on the second floor, and loud pained squeals of grunts could be heard.

Without hesitating, she immediately pointed her 87A Carbine rifle at the roof of the first floor and let loose on full auto. The bullets tore right through the feeble wooden floor, and elicited pained shrieks from the grunts above. Bullet after bullet rammed through the ceiling, chewing apart the wooden supports to get to their targets above. When half her clip was expended, the ceiling decided it could take no more and collapsed onto the floor in a heap bringing half a dozen dead grunts with it. Nothing moved; this building was clear.

She checked the last building, another convenience store, with the same method as all the others. Nothing.

With the center clear, a little tension was lifted and Red-one eased back a little, but still kept alert none-the-less, this was still a combat zone.

"A grunt got away with a ghost" Red-three said suddenly over the TEAMCOM, "Slipped away when I was reloading. Permission to pursue?"

"Negative Red-three" Red-one replied quickly, "Even in a urban environment you can't keep up with a ghost, search the camp area and make sure the area is clear and secure any technology you find. We'll need your flame thrower to burn the bodies anyway"

"Acknowledged Red-one" He responded, "All the ghosts were destroyed other then the one that got away, I've managed to secure two specters'. Proceed with area sweep?"

"I'll call Vince and have him get some of his buddies to come in and pick them up, stick with them till then, then move out when they get here"

"Yes ma'am" he cleared the channel, leaving her alone in the circular area, and leaving her alone in her thoughts.

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Red-one watched as Red-two strapped the two captured specters onto the bottom of the over sized pelican drop ships, while she threw all the Covenant technology and weapons they could find into the rear hatches. The methane tent they found, however, was far too risky for them to move, she'd mark the location and leave it too ONI personnel to deal with it. When everything was loaded, and the specters were bound, she banged on the side of the pelican to let the pilot know.

"_Copy that Red team_" A voice crackled through her speakers, "_Evacuating ordnance to the _Whisper_ now_"

"Confirmed Calvary-one" Red-one quickly replied, "After we clean up I don't believe our presence here will no longer be needed, we'll be right behind you"

"_Okey dokey Red team, see you soon_"

Without another word, Vince took off, along with his wing mate, and ascended into the sky heading for the _Dark Whisper_. Light reflected off their shiny gray hulls as their images became smaller and smaller; did he polish the armor on his pelican? She'd have to talk to him about that...

She then heard the distant staccato of machine gun fire, and immediately wondered why.

"_Renegade bogey eliminated_" a strong female voice reported promptly and conveniently, "_Picking up Red-team now_"

That was relief to her. That was supposedly the last living form other than themselves in the New Mombasa area. Meaning that this quarantined zone was no longer infected with hostile forces any further, at least not what she could gather from the Intel that the Earth's many satellites and the _Dark Whispers_ own sensory equipment. She then remembered she was supposed to be watching for the pelican, and then internally scolded herself from becoming lost in thought at that brief moment of time.

She listened to the hum of the pelican as it approached, and watched as the bulky craft suddenly flew overhead before coming to a sudden stop in mid-air and lowered slowly to the ground, the pilot ever aware of her surroundings as she gracefully guided the metal beast to the dusty ground.

She turned to check on Red-three, just finishing up burning the last pile of bodies with his flame thrower, all that once remained of the once mighty Covenant warriors now were four large piles of carbonized bone and ash.

She returned her attention to the pelican as it slightly bobbed on the ground with its initial landing, the large shocks handled the pressure easily, and then the craft settled still. Its large rear hatch opening up into what a regular sized human would consider an over sized seating area for a pelican, but a perfect fit for the armored giants that stood before it, she heard Red-two climb inside as soon as the hatch hit the ground. She turned around to make sure Red-three was heading for the pelican, and saw him running towards

the pelican with a grunt clasped by its methane tank swinging in his hand. She paused briefly at the sight, and has about to ask him about it before he stomped right past her on through the pelican's hatch. Trusting her subordinate, she clanked in right behind them and firmly grasped a handhold on the ceiling, she heard the door closing itself behind her.

The pelican was still for a moment, then lurched into the air, causing the figures inside to sway a little as it slowly started gaining altitude and headed back towards the _Dark Whisper_.

"So Jim..." Red-two said suddenly, "What's with the grunt?"

"Found him unconscious under some rubble by some destroyed cars, who knows how he didn't get hit by any bullets, but here he is" Red-three replied, also known as Jim, shaking the grunt in his hands to emphasize a little.

"Not bad for our first engagement" Red-Two spoke, before a light chuckle was emitted through his suits external speakers "Of course could have been better if _someone_ had chosen a better gun"

Red-one knew he was referring to her, and she'd be damned if she was going to let that go unchallenged.

"Well excuse me for being cautious Miro, once I saw you and Jim snatching up the chain guns, I thought it'd be best if one of us had a longer range weapon" She replied back hastily, "Because god only knows, if they saw us first then you would have been up shits creek if they didn't run right up to you"

"Jeez, Miro" Jim interjected suddenly, "Don't get Winter so upstart, or else she'll start making us do double drills for the next month, and then she'll beat us up, and I didn't even do anything".

Winter allowed herself a small smile at that comment, as biased as it was, before she remembered the grunt.

"I'm sure you'll be smart enough to bring him-" She gestured to the grunt in Jim's hands "-to the medical bay, don't need him suffocating on us. Not a good way to treat a POW, evil alien or no"

"Course' Ma'am" He nodded; it was too small to salute her in here.

The radio crackled to life again, but this time it was not for them to answer.

"_Good to see you Calvary-five, got the Centurions with you?_" a male voice said a friendly manner.

"_All 3 of them, control" _The pilot replied just as warmly before switching back to business, "_Requesting permission to dock; Authentication: Sierra, 977 echo"_

"_Permission granted Calvary-five. _ _Welcome home"

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A.N.: Whew! That was a long sucker to write, especially when I went through the trouble of writing this during exam week! It's hectic enough as it is! But I really wanted to get the second chapter up, just a preview of Spartan Centurion action really.

End
file.